

WORKING WITH INFORMAL EDUCATION: A PARTNERSHIP WITH THE GIRL SCOUTS OF THE USA (GSUSA) ON A NATIONAL LEVEL.

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Introduction

Several years ago the SSE Forum met with the Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA) to see how best to work with Youth Groups. GSUSA was chosen for several reasons: 1. They are a diverse group -- girls. 2. Their mission: to help girls be resourceful, independent women in society. 3. They are an international organization; providing us with the potential to sharing our knowledge internationally. 4. They are over 3.2 million American girls strong, as well as almost 1 million adult members -- this presents us with opportunities for many, many high-leverage activities/events. 5. They base new programs on research and evaluation. 6. They are very pro-active when looking for funding.

GSUSA Criteria

The SSE Forum, on behalf of NASA's Office of Space Science, has since formed a partnership with the GSUSA. The partnership is on a national level. The GSUSA wants us to use as our driving force two things: 1) For the most part, the leaders do not approach the science badges, patches and try-its because they are intimidated with science--our task is to help them overcome their discomfort, and 2) help them in whatever way possible to fulfill their mission, which is to help girls be resourceful and strong.

To meet these needs the GSUSA was asked what we could do for them; these were their requests:

1. Show the girls the many careers possible for them in space science and in NASA and/or its centers.
2. Provide articles for the quarterly Leader Magazine.
3. Provide articles for the online newsletter--audience is leaders, parents and girls.
4. Provide space science content for their website.
5. Provide resources (speakers, scientists, handouts, etc.) for local events.
6. Find existing space science activities the girls can use to meet the requirement for earning badges (Jr. Girl Scouts), special interest patches (Cadettes and Sr. Girl Scouts), and try-its (Brownie level).
7. Provide content for special activities, events and products, such as their Space Science Kit.
8. Develop a training program for trainers of leaders and leaders. They in turn will teach the girls the activities at summer camps, camp outs, special events and troop meetings. Create "local" badges that can be offered as part of each training module for this training program.

Infrastructure

1. SSE Forum led the effort to develop an infrastructure that would work for NASA-OSS and the Girl Scouts.

- There are three teams: the training team, the activities team, and the written word team.
- There is one contact to interact with the one GSUSA contact.
- A database has been developed to track activities throughout NASA. The database will help the OSS Support join forces to best work with Youth Groups.
- To date, the teams are made up of members of these missions/ programs: Deep Impact, JSC Astrobiology and Mars Outreach, Mars Outreach-ASU, Cassini, Galileo, , Navigator, SSA Ambassadors, JPL Technology Program, Deep Space Network Program. The Association of Women Geoscientists, JPL Advisory Council for Women, the Microgravity team at Glenn Research Center and other members of the OSS Support Network have also expressed an interest in being part of this partnership.

Progress to Date

1. The training team has taken an existing educator workshop and modified it for Informal Education. This "Exploring the Solar System" workshop was tested in Dubuque, Iowa and in New Orleans in 2001. The workshops were enthusiastically received.

We took "lessons learned" and modified the training for our first national GSUSA training workshop. This workshop took place April 19-23, 2002. Thirty trainers from all over the United States and Germany attended the training at the GSUSA Macy Training Center in New York. These trainers represented over 100,000 girls and 30,000 adult members. They will take these activities back to their councils; and those councils will share with neighboring councils. We will give six additional workshops in 2002.

2. We are now providing articles for the Leader Magazine. The first article "Former Girl Scouts Skyrocket at NASA" appeared in the Winter 2001 issue. This article gives examples of careers in space science and also links the featured women to activities that will meet the requirements for badges, patches and try-its. We will continue to focus these articles, in some way, on careers in space science.

The second article "Space Exploration on a "Small" Scale: NASA Discovery Missions" appeared in the Spring 2002 issue.

3. A Space Science Kit was developed with the Activities Team. The GSUSA asked for the space kit to focus on the Solar System. The Kit was expanded for special events and not just parent/child events. There were 3,000 kits assembled and sent to all councils. The featured career/women is Dr. Claudia Alexander, geoscientist and comet expert.

The Future

We will continue to use their requests/needs to build on this partnership. We will take the successes of this partnership and model programs for future Youth Group partnerships. The next targeted partnership will be the 4-H Clubs of America.

BIOGRAPHY

Rosalie Betrue is the Program Director for the NASA/Office of Space Science and Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA) Partnership. In this capacity, she directs the "Train the Trainer" Workshop Program, coordinates mission efforts to provide content for GSUSA publications, and explores future opportunities, such as mentoring programs, funded initiatives, etc. She is also the coordinator for NASA sponsored conferences, OSS yearly product reviews, and the OSS Directory/Registry.

In the past, Rosalie Betrue was the Director of Operations for the environmental firm, Diagnostics Engineering Inc. She was also an asbestos consultant for the state of California. In this capacity, she managed the \$5,000,000 task of surveying for all asbestos at Fort Ord and the Presidio of Monterey in California. This survey was necessary for the closure of both facilities.